

# MEDICAL POMPOSITY,

OR THE

## DOCTOR'S DREAM.

A SATIRE.

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By WM. TOD HELMUTH, M. D.

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DETROIT, MICH:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT DR. LODGE'S HOMOEOPATHIC PHARMACY.  
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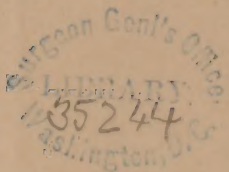
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EDWIN A. LODGE,

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F. M. BAKER, PRINTER.

## NOTE.

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Some portions of the following verses were repeated at the banquet given by the Homœopathic physicians of Chicago to the Western Institute of Homœopathy, at its first annual meeting, in May, 1864. Other parts of the same Poem were, by especial request, recited at Cincinnati, at the entertainment there provided for the American Institute of Homœopathy, at its re-organization in June, 1865.

Having been frequently solicited by my friends for copies of the same, I have been persuaded, at the request of Dr. LODGE, to place the complete manuscript in his hands for publication.

If the attempt which has herein been made to satirize that ridiculous pomposity of manner and expression which is sometimes assumed by the medical profession, will serve, in a measure to recall the memory of those pleasant re-unions where the lines were first made the property of my professional friends, I shall be amply satisfied, and would only request, that this effort, (being rather foreign to the usual style in which I have been accustomed to appear in print,) will not be too severely criticised.

WM. TOD HELMUTH.

*No. 209 Pine-St., St. Louis, }  
Dec. 4, 1865. }*





# MEDICAL POMPOSITY,

OR THE

## Doctor's Dream.

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"Many of them, to get a fee, will give physic to every one that comes, when there is no cause."—HEURNIUS.

*"Non missura curtem, nisi plena cruoris hirudo."*

"The phantasy alone is free, and his commander, reason."—BURTON.

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### PROLOGUE.

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Oh! great Apollo, God of Physic, bring  
Thy gracious presence near us, while we sing  
In strains that touch that highly favor'd art,  
That first Thou deign'st to erring man impart.  
Fair Juno, too—whose own especial might  
Auspicious proved to sacred marriage rite,  
O'ershade us now, and ere thou glid'st along,  
Drop us *one* feather to assist our song,  
And other spirits hover near, the while,  
To aid our effort with approving smile,  
While we endeavor in a critic lay  
To sing 'bout Doctors of the present day.

When Shippen\* first for stipulated fees,  
 Taught physic's laws, and gave men their degrees,  
*Ten* was the number of aspiring youth  
 Who anxious thirsted for the streams of truth.  
*Scant* was their number, *scant* the knowledge given,  
 And *scant* the patients whom they sent to heaven;  
*Scant* were the mortals whom they cured of ills,  
 And *scant* the charges in their yearly bills.  
 Mankind, in days of yore were not so blest  
 With rheums and aches which moderns so infest.  
 If ills o'ertook them, they must be endured,  
 Or tea of herbs the fretting patient cured.

That "Iron Age,"—reversing things of old,  
 Has been converted to an Age of Gold.  
 Ten thousand shutters now show forth "a tin,"  
 That tells the world "a DOCTOR" dwells within;  
 While countless boys, whose philanthropic mind  
 Burns with desire to benefit mankind,  
 Now yearly rush to bow before the shrine  
 Where dwell the great of Æsculapian line.  
 Pause—pause, ingenuous youth, and let there be  
 One gleam of common sense 'mid verdancy;  
 Let not a tinsel'd stage, with gaudy glare,  
 Allure your footsteps on,—you know not where.

\*One of the first Medical Colleges in this country was organized by Dr. Shippen, of Philadelphia. From this grew the venerable University of Pennsylvania. The first class consisted of ten students.



The painted scene looks pleasantly to you,  
 By light and shade, and *distance* of the view.  
*Behind* 'tis dark, and drear, and damp, and cold,  
 The cob-webs thick, the ragged canvas old,  
 The beauteous actress is begrimed with paint,—  
 There's no reality,—'tis all a feint.  
 So 'tis with Medicine. Education's stream  
 Once was so bright, that every laden beam  
 Of knowledge shone resplendent far and wide,  
 From College prows that stemm'd the rippling tide.  
 Now, every Doctor mans a separate craft,—  
 Crowds it with students thick, both fore and aft,—  
 Becomes a Charon,—takes a piece of *gold*,  
 Turns knowledge stream to be the Styx of old,  
 Cares for naught else than that the cargo yields,  
 And turns to Pluto's realms the Elysian fields.

Arise ! Tarquinius,\* from the realms so cold,  
 Where Nox and Erebus their revels hold,  
 Shake off their son's, dull Somnus' sway so drear,  
 And with thy former majesty appear.  
 Grant us as boon thy dignities' renown,  
 While we portray some Doctors of the town,  
 Whose bearing grave and keenly-glancing eye  
 Bear witness to their self-sufficiency.

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\*Tarquinius, surnamed *Superbus* on account of his great *pride* and *dignity*.  
 The same epithet may be applied to so many in the medical profession, that it has  
 been thought proper to awake the spirit of the original Tarquin.

Who shake their sapient locks,—look *very* wise;  
 Smell at their canes and some new plan devise  
 To keep the patient ill another day;  
 (Provided, always, that they think he'll pay,)  
 Talk of the brain, and nerves proceeding thence,  
 More wise appear, the more they distance sense.  
 Term pain “neuralgia,” or if the man be stout,  
 Cry out, “Dear Sir, you have *rheumatic* gout.”  
 Tap on the chest—some *awful* sounds they hear,  
 Then satisfied, declare, “The case is clear,”  
 Draw forth a paper, seize the magic quill,  
 And write in mystic signs, “*Cathartic* pill.”

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## The Dream.

---

'Tis midnight, now, and curious thoughts are weaving  
Mysterious spells athwart my dreamy mind,  
Which drowsily is in the distance leaving  
The world, the joys, the follies of mankind.  
And as I ponder o'er the mighty past,  
With ghostly memories my spirits teem;  
Now forms grotesque are rushing o'er me fast,  
And fairies come to lull me *to a dream*.

'Tis *not* a dream of love, as Dido fain  
Would pray to rest upon her anxious brain,  
When faithless son of old Anchises swore  
Eternal friendship, and then fled her shore.  
Nor such an one as CEnone, whose charms  
Awhile brought faithless Paris to her arms,  
Would raptured wake from and would wailing cry,  
“Many-fountained Ida, hearken ere I die.”\*  
'Tis not a dream of horror, crime or blood,  
As told of Aram by the poet Hood,  
But one in which all kinds of POTIONS, PILLS,  
PLASTERS and OINTMENTS, and “the thousand ills

---

\* Vide Tennyson's beautiful poem, “CEnone.”

Which flesh is heir to,"—and grave Doctors, too,  
Come rushing onward to my misty view.

Hark ! hark ! the sound of royal music comes,  
The trumpets bray, the parchment-headed drums  
Rattle aloud, time marking with the blow,  
That *brainless* drummers on their tops bestow.

A youth moves foremost, bearing proud on high  
A torch

Of "BARK"<sup>1</sup> and

"PITCH OF BURGUNDY,"<sup>2</sup>

While in

"ETHERIAL"<sup>3</sup> air

From founts obscured,

With golden spouts

"OL TEREBINTH"<sup>4</sup>

Is poured,

<sup>1</sup> Besides the inflammable qualities of "BARK," as known to the Aborigines, the tonic properties of the same have been the chief reliance of the disciples of Esculapius from the period of the deluge, for all kinds of weaknesses, especially those of the brain.

<sup>2</sup> *Pinus Abies*. "It is very adhesive to the skin, and consequently forms excellent plasters."—DUNGLISON.

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Ether and Chloroform," by Flagg. The combination of Ether, Bark and Pitch, would necessarily render a most brilliant light, in the darkness and mist of certain schools of medicine.

<sup>4</sup> Oil of Turpentine. A great medicine among a certain class of practitioners. Used especially by the natives of the South for torch-light processions. By the allopaths of the North for the expulsion of worms, and by St. Patrick of Ireland, for the demolition of snakes.

Which ceaseless streaming on the flick'ring fire,  
Creates new brightness, never to expire.

Then there appears

OLD CHIRON<sup>1</sup>

in the van :

Medicine's Instructor —partly horse, part man.

His noble front is bound with leaves of fig :

His locks anointed with

“ OL. CROTON. TIG.”<sup>2</sup>

With vig'rous tail he slays the

“ FLIES ”<sup>3</sup> that tease,

While imps of “ SHEEPSKIN ”<sup>4</sup>

shout

“ CANTHARIDES.”

His pupil next,

Great “ ÆSCULAPIUS,”<sup>5</sup>

see,

With grace sublime, he sips strong

“ CATNIP TEA.”

<sup>1</sup> *Chiron*—A *centaur* ; half horse, half man. Supposed to be the first professor in a Medical College, occupying the chair of Botany and Medical Jurisprudence.

<sup>2</sup> *Croton oil*—A new form of pommade.

<sup>3</sup> *Meloe escatorius*. Retaining such activity after death that they frequently hasten the same in the human subject.

<sup>4</sup> The combination of flies and sheepskins, making an excellent blister to draw on the imagination.

<sup>5</sup> *Æsculapius* read medicine with Chiron, and was a first-rate student. His career was brilliant. He had two sons who became doctors, and a daughter, who studied medicine in a Female Medical College. *Vide ut sequitur*.



His daughter,

“HYGEA,”<sup>1</sup>

near, with tresses loose,

Divides her time ’twixt

“APPLE SAUCE AND GOOSE.”

While

“SHINING MERCURY,”<sup>2</sup>

O’erhead doth flit,

Bearing his son in arms,

Pale “CHLORID MIT.”<sup>3</sup>

But oh! what grace, what dignity is seen

In “GALEN’S”<sup>4</sup> bearing as he moves supreme.

One mighty arm supports

“A PAIL OF TIN,”

With

“LIME” and “AQUA PURA,”<sup>5</sup>

Mixed within :

While on his shoulder rests a

“SCULPTURED HOD,”

Rich with

“SIX LIVERS from a SINGLE COD.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Goddess of Hygea and health, partial to digestible articles of diet, as sausage, goose, chops and dried beef. Is a special patroness of the homoeopaths.

<sup>2</sup> Synonym—“*Sheet anchor of Allopathy.*”

<sup>3</sup> The scientific appellation for “Calomel.”

<sup>4</sup> The Apothecaries’ sign. Vide “The poor gentleman,” and Coxe’s Epitome.

<sup>5</sup> The combination known to colicky infants and dyspeptic females as “Lime Water. Scientifically written “*Aqua calcis.*”

<sup>6</sup> To be mixed with three hundred parts of common lard, and labelled *pure* “Cod Liver oil.” Called in the “regular” nomenclature, *Oleum jecoris aselli.*

And thus prepared, he joins, with master art,  
Those structures fair, disease has torn apart.

“FOUR PATENT LEGS”<sup>1</sup>

A “FLAX-SEED CUSHION”<sup>2</sup> bear,  
On which there rests

“A CARBUNCLE,”<sup>3</sup>

most rare.

The gem a dragon guards with iron teeth:

“NOLI ME TANGERE,”<sup>4</sup>

The motto 'neath.

In solemn state

“A HUNDRED DONKEYS” pass,

Laden with

“TUMORS, WELL PRESERVED IN GLASS;”

A “HOTTENTOT,” with

“SETONS” in his ears,

Bearing a

“GOLD-TOPP'D CANE,”

there next appears.

But lords supreme of all who move before,  
The “HEROES” come—the objects we adore:

<sup>1</sup> The two anterior being Selpho's. The posterior known as Palmers.

<sup>2</sup> A regular old fashioned poultice.

<sup>3</sup> A gem in surgery, generally best seen on the back of the neck. The color is of a most brilliant red, and much appreciated by the wearer.

<sup>4</sup> *Lupus*—the wolf. Inscribed over the cages of the beasts as a matter of warning.

## A "CARVED SARCOPHAGUS,"

Whose pureness vies

With snow-flakes falling from their home—the skies.

Their chariot forms, the glowing wheels of BRASS

Create a deaf'ning thunder as they pass :

While on bright golden thrones, oh ! Doctors, view

POMPOSITY PERSONIFIED IN YOU.

...

## EPILOGUE.

Oh ! biped man, how oft thou bring'st the soul,  
 Immortal, to the body's foul control.  
 That jewel fair, whose far-resplendent ray  
 Transforms dark passions' night to glorious day ;  
 Whose radiance pure sheds double light around,  
 The setting dark, in which the gem is found.  
 Whose every flaw, when washed by Conscience's tears,  
 Man in the semblance of his God appears.  
 We dim that light, that ever heavenward tends,  
 Subservient render it to worldly ends ;  
 By Passion's glass we intercept the beam,  
 That, when reflected, with unhealthy gleam,  
 Tho' potent still enables us to see  
 To screen from fellow-man our obloquy.







